

Screenplay

EXT. GRAVE YARD - DAY

Early autumn. The weather is warm and soft. LEVI is sitting opposite of one of the graves. It is made of white marble stone. He is a middle-age man, his hair is dark brown with few but visible grey bits in it. His eyes are of a pale grey colour and he's dressed in a dark suit. There is a glass of liqueur next to where he is sitting. The camera only shows Levi's bust with a few graves behind him.

LEVI VO

'Hi, big brother. Today I've come without Lucien - he's gone to his best friend's birthday party today. You should know more than anyone how much attention friends need, huh? Today is quite a nice day. You'd like this kind of weather. I take those caplets as you told me to - three times a day. I never missed one. Today is a special day, isn't it? Yes. Happy birthday, big brother. Look at me... I know! (a slight smile), but I just couldn't come in my casual jeans and my bleached off shirt. This is not what you would do. And you also like white wine. I'd be honest with you - I don't like it very much. However, today is special. Do you want to have a toast with me now?

He picks up the glass of white wine. Suddenly he stops. He thinks for a moment.

LEVI VO

Actually...

He puts the wine back on the ground.

LEVI VO

Let's save it for a little later, shall we? We should have a proper conversation first. We have a whole day just to sit here on this uncomfortable ground and talk about our karma. I know you hated this kind of talk at school. You weren't sentimental at all. Even when we first met...

(There is flashback to their early childhood.)

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE VIEW - NIGHT

A spooky, wet evening. The orphanage is lighted with yellow room light.

INT. ORPHANAGE - NIGHT

A 9 years old boy comes through the main door. He became an orphan just the day before. His scared eyes are full of tears, he cries and cries and cries. He is led to his first room by the staff.

INT. CORRIDORS - NIGHT

You can hear whispers of the other children, while little Levi is walking down the corridors.

INT. ONE OF THE DOUBLE ROOMS - NIGHT

The door to his room opens.

There is a boy, three years older than him, it is ZACHARY. He has light blond hair and stark green eyes. On his neck, he wears a leather string with a black guitar plectrum. He sees Levi in tears.

A MEMBER OF STAFF

Here is your new home and your roommate.

Zach, you should say 'hello' to
your new little friend.

Zachary gives Levi a frown and then turns back to his book.

A MEMBER OF STAFF

Well, don't mind it Levi, Zach has had a B for his last geography test recently so he is slightly not in the mood today. C'mon, you should unpack your things and get ready for bed as soon as possible, as it is nearly bedtime now. Give me a shout if you need anything, or just ask Zach.

He leaves the room. Levi doesn't stop sobbing. He crouches on the floor in sorrow.

(CONTINUED)

ZACHARY (MUTTERS)

Shut up, please. If you are going to violate my private space, then you should do it quietly. I hate pussies like you. Just so you know.

It makes Levi get quiet for a second, as it was a surprise for him, but then he continues crying with even greater power. Zach sighs and gets out of his bed, looking for something in his cupboard. He finds a little bottle of white wine. He pours a little into a glass.

ZACH

Come here, you little wimp.

Levi stands up, and slowly walks towards Zach.

ZACH

You drink half of that, ok? And don't you dare spill a gram, or that will be your first and last day at this school.

Levi sniffs the wine.

LEVI

I... d-don't wan-t it...

ZACH

You know how to distinguish between a wimp and a cool guy? Cool guys always do things they would not normally do. This is called taking a risk...

Levi lowers his eyes and then drinks up the entire glass.

LEVI VO

'...Yes, it was that easy for you. Using my childish naivety, you could make me do anything, even if I hated it. Although, you never really did it to make things worse for me... You always wanted to help me.

The camera shows little Levi sleeping on his bed, in his full clothing and unpacked things left on the floor as they were.

LEVI VO

'...I fell asleep momentarily -
could not even be bothered to take
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEVI VO (cont'd)

my shoes off. That was quite a stress for my nine years old body - an entire glass of such a strong alcohol. I could feel a thin crust of dried salty tears on my cheeks. The day before - I lost both of my parents. And after you finished reading your book, you opened the window and went to sleep as well. You covered yourself with a thick blanket, only leaving your head uncovered so you could breath the chilled fresh air stream. I felt very cold. I couldn't realize it. But that night I got truly cold. '

BACK TO THE EXT. GRAVEYARD -DAY .

LEVI VO

'How funny is it? We saw each other every time we got up in the morning, or attended the same lesson. I was sure that you couldn't stand a sight of me. Of course, everyone knew that you despised the entire world and only respected yourself and your books. ' 'And who knew that once it could all change so suddenly? '

EXT.SPORTS COURT - DAY

(Levi is 13 and Zach is 16)

Some sort of a sports game. It's raining, so the ground is wet but a small amount of sunshine is still there A girl with curly ginger hair slips and falls into the mud. It is DINA. Her clothes are muddy and her knee is bleeding. The other people start laughing and teasing her. Levi comes up to her to help. She cries while he helps her to get up.

LEVI

Don't listen to them. Are you fine?
Does it hurt a lot?

DINA

Yes -yes... Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

LEVI (AFTER A LITTLE PAUSE)

Do you want to come to my mother's bookshop? - it's just round the corner. I will ask my mother to help you out with this. She trained to be a nurse when she was younger.

DINA (HESITATES)

Ok, thanks.

INT.BOOKSHOP - DAY

They enter a bookshop round the corner. A widow of age 51, a woman of pure and graceful heart (who often reads children books out loud to the orphanage kids) is sitting at the cashier. Her name is Ms Stevenson.

MS STEVENSON

Levi, sweet boy, come in, come in.
Have you finally decided to read something?

LEVI (EMPHASIZING THE WORD 'MOTHER')

No, mother, I just wanted you to help this girl...

MS STEVENSON (A LITTLE CONFUSED)

Oh... Yes, sure, come sweetheart,
that looks awful!

DINA

It hurts a lot, Ms... and I think I might get an infection... I'm all in this stupid mud...

Ms Stevenson and Dina go into another room. Levi looks around the bookshop. Suddenly he hears Zach.

ZACH

Ehm... Really? I left my room for the sake of that I would finally get some private space all by myself and you come here and make noise, and even dared to come with a woman.

LEVI

I'm only helping her out.

ZACH

I don't think so. Is it your special way of flirting?

(CONTINUED)

LEVI

...

ZACH

You don't even need to tell me anything. It's all fucking clear to me. Well, maybe, for the sake of being stupid, you better ask someone who already knows who she is and all the shit around her?...

LEVI (HESITATING)

You know her?

ZACH

Of course, I do. I know everyone. And I know everything about everyone, including you, 'sweetheart'.

LEVI

I don't care what you say about her, I think she's nice and...and I might probably ask her out.

ZACH

Well. Even if I say that I've slept with her before? And, you know, not only me, though I was her first one obviously.

That catches Levi in surprise, and once he realizes what Zach has just said - he blushes.

Then he just stands in silence.

ZACH

Poor little Levi.

LEVI

...

ZACH

And she looked so innocent, so pure, so...

LEVI (INTERRUPTS HIM)

Shut up, Zach.

Zach stands up of his chair and grabs Levi's shirt.

(CONTINUED)

ZACH

Ok, look here, Levi. All I want to ask you is be careful with your choice of girls. Or otherwise, they will hurt your little heart.

LEVI VO

And that was the moment I realized that the guy who I thought hated me to the bones... actually thought of me as his younger brother.

ZACH'S CHILDHOOD SCENE

It is the day when one of the pedestrians walking along the river, on the coasts of which the orphanage is situated, found a basket with two newborns in it.

EXT. RIVER - MORNING

A basket is slowly floating on the surface of the river, approaching closer and closer to the shore. Ms Stevenson pulls it out and uncovers the blanket. There were two sleeping newborns. One of them is Zach, and the other is his little brother.

LEVI VO

She found this basket with you and your twin brother inside it. It was bizarre that he was crying, when you weren't. Seemed like you were born stuck up! But, Ms Stevenson could not take care of two children so she left you both at the orphanage. The next day your brother had to be hospitalized as he was obviously very sick. You, on the other hand, were almost glowing with health. And not even a little tear. You brother couldn't come back. You would never realize what happened because you were just two months. But I know that his ghost kept bothering you for your entire life.

INT. ZACH'S AND LEVI'S ROOM - DAY

Zach is 17 and Levi is 14.

Zach is playing his guitar. A beautiful sad song of sorts. His staring at his playing fingers, his mind is full of thoughts.

LEVI

What is this song about?

ZACH

... (beat)... It is about how one day the guy grew up to be a hero, while his little brother grew up to be a hero too but of another kind... But for each other they were always brothers.

LEVI

What do you mean by a different kind of hero?

ZACH

The guy was a hero because he made everything reality. Whereas his brother was the one who planned it all and taught the guy how to do things.

LEVI

And who are you in this song?

ZACH

I am the one who gets all of the attention. At least when I grow up, I will be definitely him. But an Achilles cannot live without a Patroclus. He becomes weak and you know what happens next.

LEVI (AFTER A LITTLE PAUSE)

Do you miss your brother?

ZACH

No.

LEVI

You do, don't you?

ZACH

I don't miss my brother. His right next to me. He never brushes his

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ZACH (cont'd)
hair and doesn't have a clue of
relationship.

Levi smiles.

LEVI VO
And that was enough for us to start
calling each other 'brother'
sometimes. All of the God-forgotten
children were jealous of me,
because I was the only one at whom
you didn't glance with despise. You
were an all rounder - best at
sport, best at academics, best at
art... A genius of sorts. I was
trying my best and getting a
well-deserved B. I was making
plans, like the brother of the guy
from the song. I was planning out
our lives together in future, where
you would be a hero and I would be
'the one who plans'. I wasn't quite
sure about the teaching bit because
it was always you who taught stuff.
And everything seemed just right.
Just how it goes between normal
brothers in a normal family. And
then it was your eighteen's
birthday.

ZACH'S 18TH BIRTHDAY

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Levi is sitting at one of the desks in the orphanage old
library. The room is quite small and all the shelves there
are chaotic and disorganised. Levi is writing something on a
golden card with a deep-black pen. He uses his best writing
- the one which looks like the Old English font.

LEVI VO
On the day of your birthday, I
finished our plan for your future
life, where you become a famous
hero at the end. When I was doing
it, I tried to think as such so
that your life would be challenging
but interesting and had a nice cool
ending. I thought it could be a
sacrifice of sorts - maybe you
could die while saving your
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LEVI VO (cont'd)
girlfriend's life, or - maybe die
while fighting for your beliefs.
And then, I would write a book
about your remarkable life.

Levi closes the card and walks out of the library, starting his way to their room, where he expects Zach to be.

LEVI (VO)
18 years old is always a freedom of
sorts to do anything you want. I
was only 15, and my birthday isn't
during freezing winter like yours,
when cold snowflakes invaded
our world through the holes of the
ancient-looking wooden window
frames. My birthday is in the
middle of July, with all the
sunshine and warmth in the heart.
When I walked into our room I felt
exactly like if it was my birthday.
And everything seemed just right,
except...

INT. ZACH'S AND LEVI'S ROOM

Levi opens the door and stops dead.

LEVI VO
...that you weren't reading
Nietzsche on your bed, or playing
indie rock music, or eating liqueur
sweets, or...

Levi takes a few steps into the room and stands in front of the window, which made him feel very cold in his first day at the orphanage. The window is wide opened and a hundred of snowflakes fly into the almost empty room. There is a note on Zach's bed.

Levi approaches the bed and reads the note. It says:

' 'And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back at you.' So big brother is away to find something better than this.'

Levi's hand starts shaking and he drops the note on the floor. Then he drops the card, which falls on the top of the note.

AN ABRUPT CUT TO THE NEXT SCENE

MONTAGE OF LEVI'S REACTION TO ZACH'S ESCAPE

Levi has just punched Steve in the face. Steve's nose is bleeding. There is an obvious shock in everyone's faces.

Levi's smoking pot in a club. There are some random girls on the sofa with him. The music is playing loudly.

Levi is lying on his bed, smiling.

Levi steals a car and takes part in street-racing.

Levi sleeps with Dina.

Levi is lying on his bed, smiling wider. There is a little hint of madness in his eyes.

Levi tries heroin.

EVERYTHING GOES BLACK.

GRAVE YARD

EXT. GRAVE YARD - DAY

Levi is sitting where he was. He stares at the name of Zach, engraved on the white marble stone.

LEVI

That was a betrayal. And it kept destroying my self for long, until the time came. I realized that you didn't just disappear. I realized that you were out there, just somewhere else, just not where I could physically see you. And on the day when I turned 18...

FIRE AT THE ORPHANAGE

The orphanage building is on fire, there is a chaos and panik around it.

Levi is standing next to a tree, holding an orphanage's dog and smoking a cigarette.

He puts the dog on the ground and looks into its eyes.

LEVI

'And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back at you.'

(CONTINUED)

He looks at the burning building. Then his hand relaxes and the cigarette drops to the ground.

ABRUPT CUT TO THE NEXT SCENE

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

It is a noisy and expensive restaurant. Levi is around 26 years old. He is sitting at the table with a man older than him. They are both dressed in official suits and are shaking each others' hands. That was a huge business deal, which worked out well for Levi.